

Edmund Gubbins
98 Smith Road
East Haddam, CT 06423

Environment Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 3200
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Committee Members:

I'm writing in support of House Bill number 5583, An Act Concerning An Agreement Regarding the Annual Water Level of Bashan Lake in the Town of East Haddam.

I am a lifelong resident of Bashan Lake in East Haddam. I am also the president of the Laurel Cove Beach Association located on Bashan Lake. I believe we need the lake's water to be drawn down on an annual basis, and we need a flexible approach to the water draw down. The water draw down will protect property owner's waterfront walls from being destroyed by ice damage. It will also allow for continued remediation of invasive weeds

Having grown up on the lake, I know that the water has been drawn down every year. The water was originally drawn down to power the Mills on the Moodus River. Based on this draw down schedule, property owners around the lake took the time and money to invest in building stone and concrete walls in front of their property to prevent top soil erosion on their waterfronts. This enabled Bashan Lake to remain as one of the cleanest lakes in the State. Unfortunately we have evidence of the damage done to these walls by ice when the lake was not lowered in more recent years.

In 2014 the DEEP undertook a project to repair the dam on Bashan Lake. This project necessitated the lowering of the lake by 18 feet, leaving all the coves bare. Unfortunately, due to multiple delays in the contracting and building processes, the project wasn't completed as expected by February 1, 2015. The dam wasn't closed to start collecting water until June 1, 2015. Since we missed capturing the snow run off, and because of the drought last summer, the coves were turned into wetland areas. They became breeding grounds for a multitude of wetland weeds, including cat tails and invasive plants which need eradicating.

The expectation is that the lake will still be down several feet in our coves during the summer of 2016 due to a lack of rain over the past season. The coves are at high risk to have an ongoing issue with these wetland weeds. Experts have told us that it will take years to resolve this problem. Cat tails will grow in 2 -3 feet of water and can form floating mats in deeper water. Phragmites is an aggressive, invasive species that has the ability to adapt to growing in deeper water. Both weeds grow tall and extend above the surface of the water.

Residents of Bashan Lake and the Town of East Haddam are passionate about our lake. The Bashan Lake Association and Town residents have worked hand in hand with the Town of East Haddam for years. Both have spent countless hours and large sums of money to ensure the proper care of this lake. We are the best stewards of the lake and best suited to determine when and by how much the lake needs to be lowered. We have the best interests of the quality of the lake in our hearts.

Thank you for raising this bill. I am in favor of this bill, and I strongly urge you to pass it.

Sincerely,

Ed Gubbins